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AUTHOR Georgakakos, John H.
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ABSTRACT

This literature review considers definitions of strategic planning as well as historical and operational aspects of its use at community colleges. First, a number of definitions of strategic planning are presented, indicating that, compared to long-range planning, strategic planning is more action-oriented and more concerned with issues, the assessment of the environment inside and outside the college, and the achievement of an idealized vision of the organization. Next, the historical context in which strategic planning emerged is described, with special emphasis on the causes and effects of declining enrollments and dwindling funding. The next section considers the characteristics and failings of the two most common approaches to college administration in the 1980s, management by objectives and incrementalism, and discusses the way in which strategic planning blends the best features of both. After identifying common aspects of the strategic plans of different organizations, the paper examines several models of strategic planning. Brief descriptions are provided of content- and process-based approaches and a model for multi-campus districts. A more detailed description is presented of a general eight-step model, involving: (1) initiating and agreeing on a strategic planning process; (2) identifying organizational mandates; (3) clarifying organizational mission and values; (4) assessing the external environment; (5) assessing the internal environment; (6) identifying the strategic issues facing the organization; (7) formulating strategies to manage the issues; and (8) establishing an effective organization vision for the future. Comparisons are drawn between this and other models of strategic planning. (JMC)

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Strategic Planning in the Community Colleges

by
John H. Georgakakos

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Strategic Planning in the Community Colleges

Introduction: The Old Days

During the 1980s much attention has been given to the topic of strategic planning in educational settings (Keller 1983, 1989; Day, 1983; Kintzer, 1984; Zeiss 1986; Vail, 1989). But what is strategic planning?

Bryson (1988, p.5) defines strategic planning as "a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization (or other entity) is, what it does, and why it does it." To Herrington Bryce (1987, p. 116) strategic planning is a process used by the organization to adjust "to meet both the opportunities and challenges of the future." Much of this sounds like old wine in new bottles. Certainly these definitions apply to the stellar leadership of Daniel Coit Gilman who led Johns Hopkins University to research prominence back in the late 1800s, or to Charles W. Eliot who spearheaded and guided the development of the electives program at Harvard during this same span of history (Brubacher & Rudy, 1976). The dynamic leadership of reformer president Arthur E. Morgan at Antioch and the high-powered honors curriculum of president Frank Aydelotte at Swathmore in the early 1900s provide similar examples, for four year colleges (Clark, 1970). Even the community colleges have not been without their visionary leaders: witness the renowned Cooperative Education Program at

Riverside City College during the 1920s and 30s under the durable A. G. Paul who served as the college's president from 1920 to 1950 (Jiminez & Johnson, 1981).

Some might argue that these bygone presidents engaged in long-range planning but not strategic planning. According to Kast ann Rosenzweig strategic planning deals with "decisions regarding the broad technological and competitive aspects of the organization, the allocation of resources (human and material) over an extended period, and the long-run integration of the organization within its environment" (in Myran, 1982, p.2). On the other hand they see long-range planning more akin to "derivative, functional, or operational planning." Bryson (1988), while noting the terms strategic planning and long-range planning are often used synonymously and may exhibit little difference in outcomes, offers a more trenchant comparison:

1. Strategic planning relies more on identifying and resolving issues, while long-range planning focuses more on specifying goals and objectives and translating them into current budget and work programs.

2. Strategic planning emphasizes assessment of the environment outside and inside the organization far more than long-range planning does. Long-range planners tend to assume that current trends will continue into the future, while strategic planners expect new trends, discontinuities, and a variety of surprises.

3. Strategic planners are more likely than long-range planners to summon forth an idealized version of the organization--the "vision of success"--and ask how it might be achieved.

4. Finally strategic planning is much more action oriented than long-range planning. Strategic planners usually consider a range of possible futures and focus on the implications of present decisions and actions in relation to that range (p. 7).

While further discussion of the actual mode of planning used by the great educational leaders of the past might prove to be both stimulating and rewarding, it does not serve the larger purposes of this paper, one of which is to look at strategic planning circa 1980-1989, (although lessons from the past and a historical perspective should not be disregarded as trivial).

In the last decade, perhaps no one has been a more ardent spokesperson for the new wave of strategic planning than George Keller, author of the highly acclaimed Academic Strategy: The Management Revolution in American Higher Education published in 1983. Keller admonishes college and university leaders to take stock of what business they are in, who their clientele is, what values the institution holds dear, what vision of the future they hold for their organization, and how they intend on achieving that vision. One of the reasons for Keller's glowing success with the book was because it was written at a turning point in the history of higher education.

1978 saw the passage of the Jarvis-Gann Initiative (Proposition 13) in California, the beginning of the tax revolution that thundered through the nation crippling the financial base of many institutions of learning. In part it was a reaction to much of what had transpired in education in the previous decade: students disaffected with traditional curriculums, diminished academic skills of high school graduates, a virtual smorgasbord of course offerings spontaneously generated from the various sectors of higher education but particularly the community colleges (CCs) where students came for a variety of reasons (Cohen & Brawer, 1982). Some came for the

collegiate or transfer function, yet standards declined as a bevy of new courses such as black English and ethnic studies popped up. By 1980, nine out of ten students enrolled in community college liberal arts classes were in courses requiring no prerequisite (Clark, 1987, p. 88). Students also stormed the admissions office in increasing numbers to sign up for courses in career education (also called vocational-technical or occupational education). By the late 1970s the percentage of students in career education had surpassed that in the collegiate programs (Cohen & Brawer, 1982). Enrollments in remedial courses also swelled[1] so that by the end of the 1970s about one-third of all math courses and four out of every ten English classes were remedial (Cohen & Brawer, 1982, p. 232). In addition, beginning in about the mid-1970s, students wanted more offerings in community education. (This broad area encompasses aspects of adult education: continuing education; community service; and even remedial, transfer, and career education, to the extent these tend to upgrade or enhance one's skills, or fill the educational gap of an adult learner.) So by 1980 CC community education programs had nearly 4 million participants--primarily enrolled in short courses, workshops, and non-credit courses (Cohen & Brawer, 1982, p.18).

A number of explanations for this phenomenon has been offered by Cohen and Brawer (1982), including changing demography, increased college attendance, television, a breakdown in respect for authority. They especially emphasize, however, a decline in academic requirements and expectations at all levels of schooling, since these may be directly attributable to and controlled by the schools.

Still many colleges and universities faced declining enrollments, and some--like Wisconsin's Milton College--went bankrupt and had to board up their doors (Keller, 1983). And with the tax revolt came the unofficial pronouncement that the golden age of unbridled expansionism in higher education that had prevailed in the 1960s and 1970s was over. The era of retrenchment had begun!

One crucial consequence of the tax revolt was a shifting of funding away from local governments more toward the state. In California the state's share of funding for the community colleges catapulted from 42% in 1978 to 80% in 1980 (Cohen & Brawer, 1982). Some states according to Wattenberger and Heck (1983) assumed over 90% of the bill. Now the old adage goes: He who pays the fiddler calls the tune. And so it came to pass. In 1982 the California Legislature published the infamous "hit list" of courses such as "Jogging," "Language for Travelers," "Beginning Fiber Art" that it just would not fund: these were less than college grade. The squeeze was on, and as Keller (1983) wrote, a specter was haunting higher education--the specter of "decline and bankruptcy."

So the experts predicted "between 10 percent and 30 percent of America's 3100 colleges and universities will close their doors or merge with other institutions by 1995" (Keller, 1983, p.3), and they expected the smaller private colleges and the academically weaker state colleges and community colleges to be hit the worst. Fortunately these dire predictions have not come to pass...yet. The latest (1987) Carnegie Foundation Classification of Institutions of Higher Education lists roughly 3400 colleges and universities. This is

not to suggest Keller's thesis is untenable, for indeed financial and political pressures have been brought to bear, particularly on the CCs. By 1984 the California community colleges were charging"fees" to take classes: $5 per unit, up to a maximum of $50. Similar circumstances prevailed elsewhere in the country, with fees increasing anywhere from 20 to 100 percent over the decade since 1975 (Deegan, Tillery, & Associates, 1985). In 1986 the California Master Plan Commission issued a report specifying the hierarchy of priorities for the colleges--transfer and vocational education as primary, remedial as an important secondary function, non-credit adult education and fee-based community services were considered authorized functions (Cohen & Brawer,1987, pp. 59-60). Furthermore a number of non-college and non-university agencies such as the military, professional associations, corporations, private businesses, museums, and the like have begun competing in earnest with mainstream academe for students (Deegan, Tillery, & Associates, 1985; Keller, 1983), not to mention the avid competition that goes on between the colleges and universities themselves for reputation and resources (Astin, 1987; Clark, 1987).

The point is that it is useful to look at Keller's work in the context of the historical niche which it occupies, for at that swivel point in history, it seemed perfectly reasonable-- perhaps more so then than now--to articulate that the two most common approaches to running institutions of higher education, that is, management by objectives and incrementalism, were not cutting the mustard--a new approach, strategic planning, was required.

A Blend of Two Philosophies

Management by objectives according to Keller (1983) is an offshoot of management science which has philosophical roots dating back to late eighteenth century France and Clause-Henri de Rouvroy Compte de Saint-Simon (1760-1825), who proposed a technocratic society efficiently guided by educated scientists, industrialists, social engineers, and social scholars. The philosophy was given empirical substance in the industrial United States by the efforts of the high strung Frederick Taylor (1856-1915), the originator of time studies and efficiency engineering, who loathed waste, sloppiness, and working by rule of thumb and who believed management could be a scientific enterprise. Keller astutely logs the evolution of management science through World War II--when it became known as operations research--into the computerized 1950s and 60s when it metamorphosed into systems analysis. Thus a new breed of industrial manager emerged (and to a lesser extent in higher education), one who managed by the numbers and who had a penchant for problems that could be quantified and computerized by a team of researchers who could then utilize the electronic information to prognosticate possible futures for an organization as well as systematize and evaluate accomplishments or circumstances of the past and present. In short, management science is synchronized with a view of the organization as a bureaucracy governable by rational-economic principles.

While colleges and universities may be conceived of as rational, an alternative conception is rife: that they are political jungles,

and as such do not lend themselves well to long-range or blueprint-like planning methodologies fortified by lucidly stated goals but instead are issue driven and hence more conducive to management on the basis of short term strategies--a process of handling one crisis after another, a process of muddling through, a governance by "adhocracy," if you will. Clark (1983) eloquently discusses both the foregoing perspectives of organizations.

Proponents of incrementalism, such as political economist Charles Lindblom (1959, 1979), have fired a fusillade at the management scientists, claiming their methods are too rigid, socialistic, and oblivious to the pluralistic nature of America where deals, compromises, and adjustments are made daily. Incrementalism then is somewhat more consensual and democratic than the scientific approach; as such, change tends to be relatively slothful, coming through hundreds of tiny steps with none heavy enough to rock the boat--steps which "appear as remedies....small, reasonable responses to great pressures" (Keller, 1983, p. 106). It is tempting to assume the converse for scientific management--that change is swift and efficient; however, this is not the case and the literature is replete with accounts of failure to change an organization when decisions are made at the highest administrative echelons--and efficiently at that--and then handed on down the chain of command in a systematic rational way for implementation at the lower levels (Sarason, 1982; Levine, 1980). In fact, during the 1970s many colleges and universities attempted to adopt rational decision-making procedures supported by quantitative information and sophisticated modeling and

forecasting techniques, only to find them failing to take root primarily because of financial exigencies, skepticism in the forecasting methods, and the belief by many leaders that they could "feel" their way through the dilemmas as they arose (Deegan, Tillery, & Associates, 1985). Hence it is no wonder that 90% of academic management in the early 1980s was of the incremental variety (Office of the Chancellor, California Community Colleges, 1983). What becomes nerve racking in the wake of this statement is what Keller (1983, p. 97) refers to as the planner's dilemma: "The greater the threats and the more rapid the change, the greater the need for planning. Yet the greater the uncertainty about tomorrow, the larger the chance that today's plans will be inadequate or insufficient." Consequently a number of presidents throw up their hands, resigning themselves to the short-term, believing "he who lives by the crystal ball often eats broken glass" (Keller, 1983, p. 106).

Yet managing a college should be more than moving away from ills and stomping out fires. To Keller (1983), strategic planning seeks to blend the best of management science and incrementalism. Leaders should be proactive and move toward known objectives, yet not be so immune to campus culture and political exigencies that any plan of forecasting that results will become simply another shelf-document. The model of change, then, must incorporate the organic and dynamic qualities of the politician with the far reaching and visionary (albeit staid and antiseptic) characteristics of the scientific manager. The model itself has a kind of Darwinian aspect, focusing on the present as well as the future, and on how to get from now to then:

the emphasis is on process. Keller also agrees with leading psychologist James March that scientific planners tend to underplay the symbolic, emotional side of organizational behavior. Masland (1985) has written about how rituals, sagas, heroes, and symbols--what he calls windows to organizational culture--can be powerful determinants in the everyday workings of the college; hence they should not be overlooked as part of the ecology of strategic planning.

Taking a different tack for the moment, we can do what Deegan et. al. (1985) did, that is, specify what strategic planning is not:

> ...strategic planning is neither the production of a master plan or a set of platitudes nor a personal vision of the chief administrator. It is not a compilation of departmental plans, a form of surrender to external conditions, or something done at an annual retreat. Yet many of these elements may be incorporated into a strategic planning process which, while future oriented, remains responsive to the needs of the present (p. 297)

Peterson (1980, p. 140) believes strategic planning should function primarily "to foster adaptation by assuring congruence with the external environment." This view of strategic planning is again animated and Darwinian; and while hinting at internal and external assessment, it does not implicate the notion of vision. What does become clear, however, especially after analysis of the case studies reported by the office of the Chancellor, California Community Colleges (1983) is that just as no two researchers' conceptions of strategic planning are exactly alike, no two colleges' approaches to strategic planning are precisely the same. "There is no single nor ideal way to begin, conduct, and use the outcomes of strategic planning" (Deegan, Tillery & Associates, 1985, p. 298). Each plan

appears to have a home-grown flavor; for me this is simply the campus ethos--the symbolic component--on display, finding expression in the plan. In other words, a good strategic plan will involve elements that are not only rational and political, but symbolic as well. And it is still possible to find common elements among the various strategic plans of different organizations. For example, the commonalities found in the models report issued by the Chancellor's Office for the four community colleges involved in the study and alluded to above are:

1. Leadership and Support are Essential. To move from incrementalism to strategic planning, strong leadership with reinforcement by the institutional teams is indispensable.

2. A Continuing Process is Crucial. A commitment to a continuing process is vital. Plans should not simply be created and then filed away.

3. Those who Use the System Should Design It. Wide participation is most important. Tactics for gaining and sustaining wide participation will vary from one institution to another.[2]

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2. We have already pointed out the documentation (Levine, 1980; Sarason, 1982) that a top down, authoritarian (theory X) approach to implementing change without proper concern for the input, ideas, ethos, and participation of those most directly affiliated with carrying out the change is almost certain to fail. It is therefore worth noting that just as effective strategic planning will allow for the proper blending of the rational, political, and symbolic, so too effective leadership will manifest an appropriate balance of widely written about leadership styles or governance models--X, Y, and Z (see Silverman (1987) for an excellent review). Theory Z (Ouchi, 1981) is more a family or departmental approach, while Theory Y lies somewhere in between X and Z, much like a negotiated settlement. Thus each theory when understood may prudently be woven into both institutional governance and the strategic planning process itself.

4. The Planning is Proactive. The theme of being "on the move" (the slogan of Riverside Community College) or of being results oriented--these help affirm that the process is vibrant. It is important to demonstrate the fruits of the planning effort, particularly in making sure that the planning process "drives the budget."

5. Information is Power in Planning. Gather reliable and usable information. Those involved in the process need to do their homework.

6. Planning Has Multiple Uses. Each institution had more than a single purpose in mind--e.g., management, program review, accreditation self-study.

How do the above six commonalities and various definitions of strategic planning relate and align--if at all--with published blueprints or guidelines for strategic planning? Before attempting to answer this question, however, a few more points about incrementalism and management science are in order as well as the introduction of some alternative formulations of strategic planning.

In actuality management science's roots predate the French Revolution and lie in the military plans of many historic warriors and generals; incrementalism, on the other hand, has its basis in democratic politics where bargaining is essential and long-range planning exceedingly difficult (Keller, 1983). As a meld of the two philosophies, strategic planning affords colleges and businesses the opportunity to live in a familiar today while preparing to live in a very different tomorrow. Recently, Japanese businesses have been considerably more strategic minded than their American competitors who have laxed into a muddling through mode, focusing on quarterly profit sheets while giving short shift to internal/external assessment, quality control, conduction of research, or planning for profits long

term. Balance again becomes the key word: it is not just now or just tomorrow. The following football analogy vivifies the situation:

> In football, a key step in the game is taken before the whistle is ever blown. It comes when the coaches review the game films of the coming opponent and the condition of their own team, and then talk with the players about strategy for the forthcoming contest. What kind of game should they expect? How should they try to play it? Are the opponent's conventional defenses to be expected or something new in the way of blitzing the passer or position-jumping? The success with which coaches and players answer these questions has no small part to play in how the team performs during the game.
>
> Similarly in planning it is helpful to know what kind of action to expect when the work gets under way (Keller, 1983, pp. 112-113).

Some incrementalist characteristics that may become evident during the strategic planning process are: 1) modest goals and small steps toward them, 2) recognition of the complexity of issues and prediction, 3) sequential trial and error with self-correction, 4) negotiation among competing views, and 5) pragmatic decisions (Office of the Chancellor, California Community Colleges, 1983). On the management science side we have: 1) short as well as long-range goals, 2) information gathering, storage, and analysis, 3) assessment of environments, and 4) rational decision making with delegation of authority in an appropriate chain of command (Keller, 1983).

Strategic Planning Models

Now according to Bryson (1988) there are nine approaches to strategic planning (at least)--five content approaches and four process approaches. Very briefly the five content approaches are:

1. Harvard Policy Model--used to develop a fit between the organization and the environment.

2. Strategic Planning Systems--formulate a mission, strategies to get there, a budgetary blueprint for action, and a way of assessing how well the organization is achieving its objectives.

3. Stakeholder Management Approaches--look at the clientele, its characteristics and try to manage the clientele to further the goals of the organization.

4. Portfolio Model--think of the organization as a collection of businesses or stocks to be managed.

5. Competitive Analysis--who are the organization's customers, suppliers, competitors? Can competitors produce a substitute product? Are there likely to be new competitors and if so in what areas?

The four process approaches are:

1. Strategic Issue Management--perform a SWOT analysis of the organization--that is look at its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; define the strategic issues; develop strategies to deal with the issues.

2. Strategic Negotiation--allows planners to reach politically acceptable results. It does not assume or guarantee the technical workability of the results. For more details on this method see Fisher and Ury's (1983) best seller Getting To Yes.

3. Logical Incrementalism--much like Keller's incrementalism...considered by Bryson as a form of strategic planning.

4. Strategic Planning as a Framework for Innovation--

   a) relies on many elements of other approaches, e.g., SWOT analysis and portfolio methods,

   b) uses innovation as a strategy,

   c) uses special management practices to support the strategies developed--e.g., project teams; diversification, acquisition, divestment task forces; R & D operations; organizational development techniques.

   d) development of a "vision of success"--this will help provide the decentralized and entrepreneurial components of the organization with a common set of superordinate goals toward which to work.

e) nuture the innovative, entrepreneurial aspects of the organizations culture.

Bryson points out that the planner may be more of a technician if content approaches only are employed, otherwise he should be a hybrid politician and technicrat, reminiscent of Keller's view. He also believes prudent decision makers must be strategic planners, and as such they should function as facilitators of strategic decision making across levels and functions. While advocating the development and testing of strategic planning designs, responsive to different situations in the public and nonprofit sectors, Bryson--like Keller--also stresses that thinking and acting is more important than the particular strategic planning model used.

Kinser (1984) built on the work of Selznick (1957) to develop a four step blueprint, guideline or model, if you will, for multi-campus community college districts. First, is the development of a mission statement and districtwide goals. Second, strategies or techniques to help integrate district/institutional purposes into the social structure should be fashioned. Third, institutional values should be maintained at all levels; and fourth, consent is gained from constituencies primarily by encouraging creativity and program relevance: (a) by avoiding risks of depersonalization inherent in overcentralization and (b) by circumspect coordination and supervision of services and activities.

Yet the Kinser model, like so many others, was designed with a specific goal in mind--decentralization. It is therefore not a suitable model for strategic planning in general; Bryson's (1988)

eight step process, on the other hand, is--it is logical, appealing, well-thought-out, and synopsized below:

step 1. Initiating and agreeing on a strategic planning process.

step 2. Identifying the organizational mandates.

step 3. Clarifying the organizational mission and values.

step 4. Assessing the external environment: opportunities and threats.

step 5. Assessing the internal environment: strength and weaknesses.

step 6. Identifying the strategic issues facing the organization.

step 7. Formulating strategies to manage the issues.

step 8. Establishing an effective organization vision for the future.

Some strong visionary leader, or group, will usually initiate the process. The agreement itself should identify which persons, groups, or units should be involved; the purpose of the effort; the preferred steps in the process; the form and timing of reports; the role, functions, and membership of any group or committee empowered to oversee the effort; the role, functions, and membership of the strategic planning team; and the commitments of necessary resources to proceed with the effort (Bryson, 1988, p. 48).

Steps 2 and 3 involve establishing what the organization "must" do and "wants" to do, respectively. This will involve asking some of the questions suggested by Keller; namely, Who are we? Who are our clients? What can we and can't we do legally? What is our philosophy and what are our core values? What makes us distinctive and unique? Ultimately a mission statement and a list of values should be produced.

Steps 4 and 5 basically entail a SWOT analysis of both the internal and external environments. While proper information gathering procedures are crucial, Bryson warns that too "highly elaborate, lengthy, sophisticated, and quantified procedures...are likely to drive out strategic thinking, not promote it" (p. 136). He says, "By far the most important strategic planning technique is group discussion" (p. 138). Steps 1 through 5 are critical for laying the foundation for what Bryson considers the heart of the process--step 6. identifying strategic issues.

A strategic issue is defined as a "fundamental policy choice affecting an organization's mandates, mission, values, product or service level and mix, clients or users, cost, financing, organization, or management" (Bryson, 1988, p. 139). Thus in step 6 fundamental policy choices are made, such as, which courses, if any, should be offered at an off campus location, or what is the role of part-time instructors in the organization. Obviously, the way these choices are formulated can have "a profound effect on decisions that define what the organization is, what it does, and why it does it" (p. 139).

Step 7 involves devising strategies to deal with the issues identified in step 6. By strategy Bryson (1988, p.163) means the "pattern of purposes, policies, programs, actions, decisions, or resource allocations that define what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it." Strategy becomes an arm of the mission: it helps the organization flourish in the environment.

Comparing Bryson's eight step model with the five content and four process approaches presented earlier, one finds the present model more versatile and powerfully eclectic. For instance, assessment of the external environment would most certainly involve understanding characteristics and expectations of stakeholder factions (content approach 3) as well as necessitate an appraisal of competitors (content approach 5). At the same time forging internal/external assessment data into strategies to make the organization most compatible with the environment gleans from both the Harvard Policy Model (content approach 1) and Strategic Issue Management (process approach 1); it also reminds of Keller's Darwinian conception. Furthermore, the Bryson model supports use of the six consensus or commonality items (listed earlier) reported by the four community colleges in the study sponsored by the Chancellor's Office (1983); nonetheless, it does not demand the use of these items. For example, we have seen that Bryson advocates group discussion, but he does not assert those who use the system should design it. In fact he states (p. 177):

> Effective strategy formulation can be top down or bottom up. The organizations that are best at strategic planning indeed seem to combine the two approaches into an effective strategic planning system. Usually some sort of overall strategic guidance is given at the top, but detailed strategies and their implementation typically occur deeper in the organization.

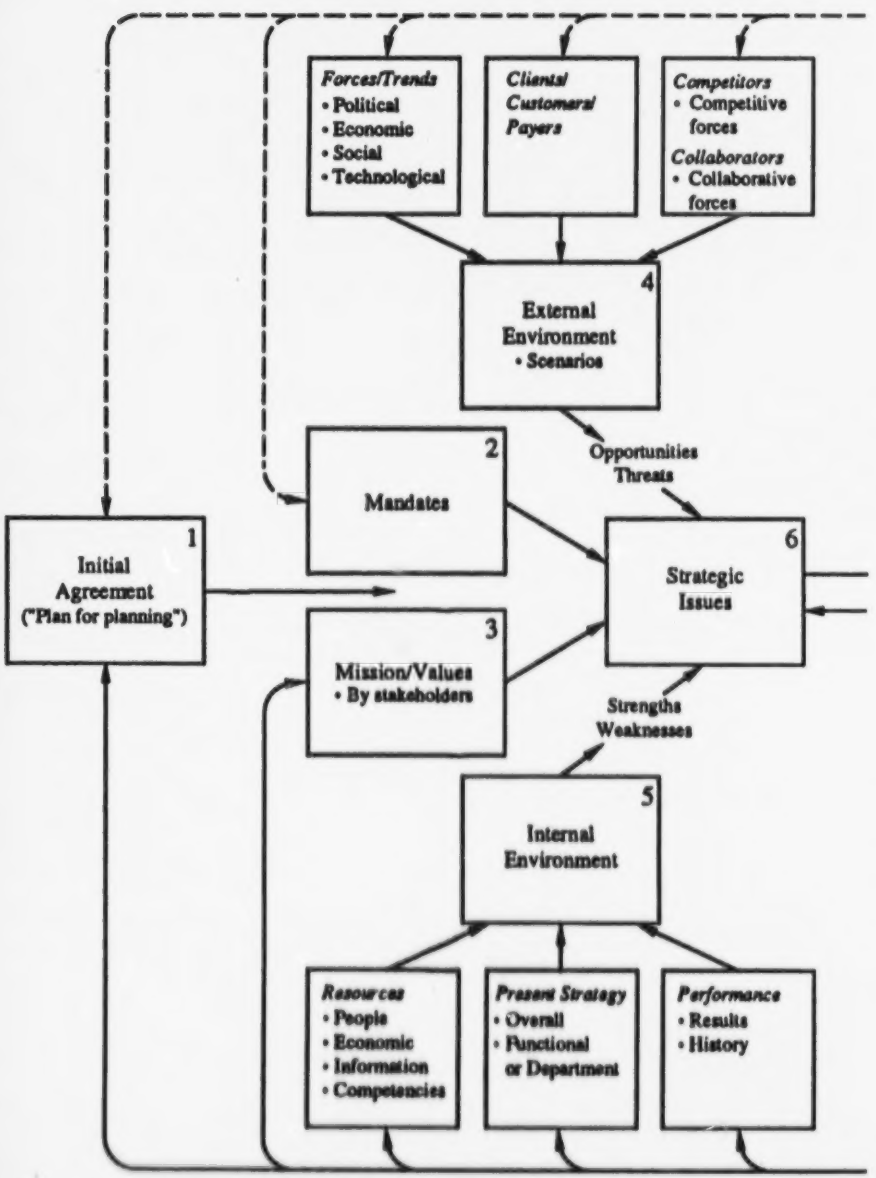
Apparently Bryson seems to favor balancing use of theories X, Y, Z, depending upon the tenets or particulars of a given strategic planning process. Further elaboration of Bryson's eight steps may be found in his insightful book where a chapter is devoted to each one. Finally,

as Bryson (1988, p.61) notes, the steps need not be followed sequentially, i.e., development of a vision does not have to come last. "Some organizations are able to develop a fairly clearly articulated vision of success much earlier in the process."

Presented on the next page is a copy of Bryson's Strategic Planning Model (Figure 1). As can be seen, strategy formulation consists of steps 1-8: Various interrelationships are shown, with step 6--the development of strategic issues--at the hub of the process, influenced on all sides by each of the seven other components. Following the strategy formulation phase is the implementation phase, where actions and results hold center stage; these may be evaluated, of course, and fed back into the process. The organic nature of the model is evident.

Following Figure 1, several other strategic planning designs (Figures 2 through 5) are also presented for contrast, comparison, and completeness. Figure 2 is the Planning Model for Riverside Community College (taken from Office of the Chancellor, California Community Colleges, 1983). Figures 3 and 4, respectively, are The Flow Chart of the Institutional Planning Process and Conceptual Model for Florida Junior College both extracted from Ferguson (1981). Figure 5 is the Strategic Planning Model presented by Myran (1982). Similarities between the models include attention to mandates, mission, internal and external environments, and feedback. Other parallels also exist: for example, Riverside's "synthesizing process" in its strategic phase functions (apparently) much like Bryson's step 6 in his strategy formulation phase. Likewise Riverside's operational and procedural

Figure 1. Strategic Planning Process.



Source: Bryson and Roering, 1987, p. 10.

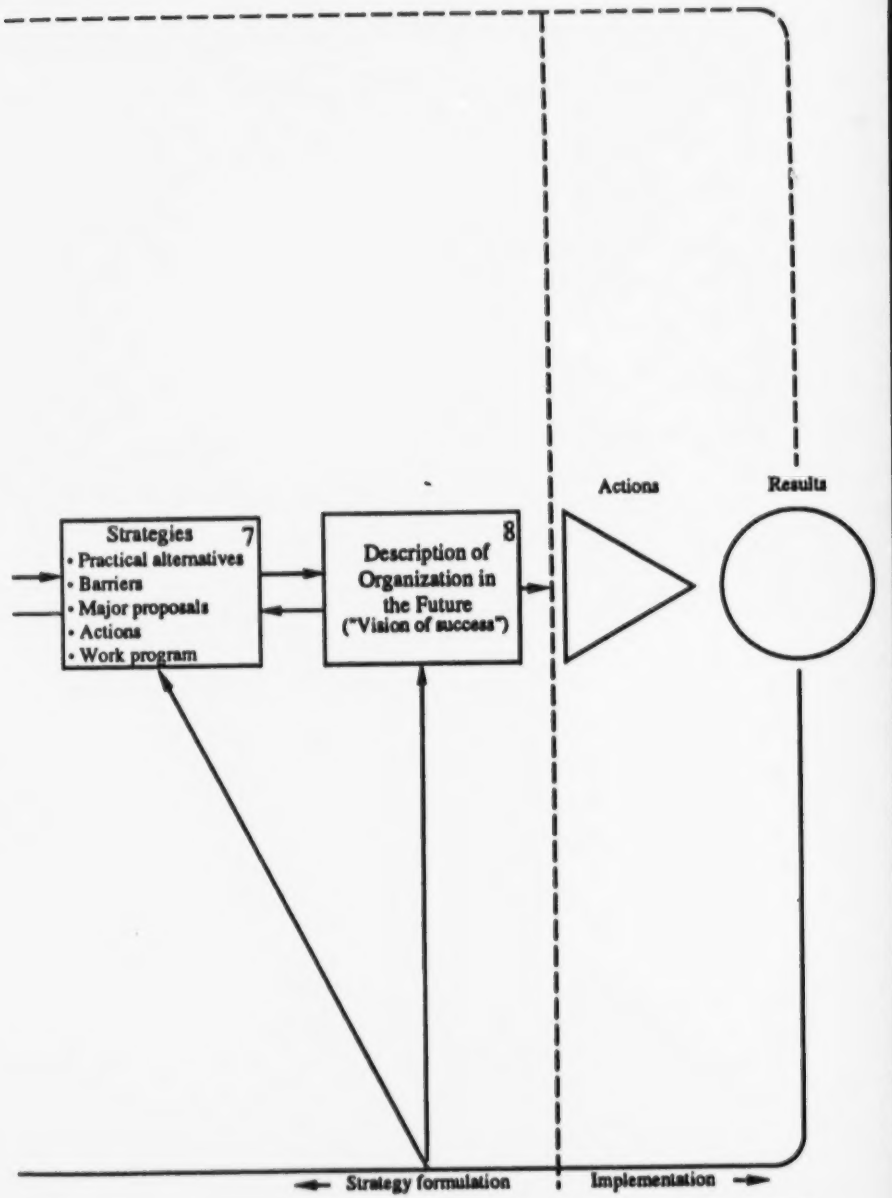


Figure 2.

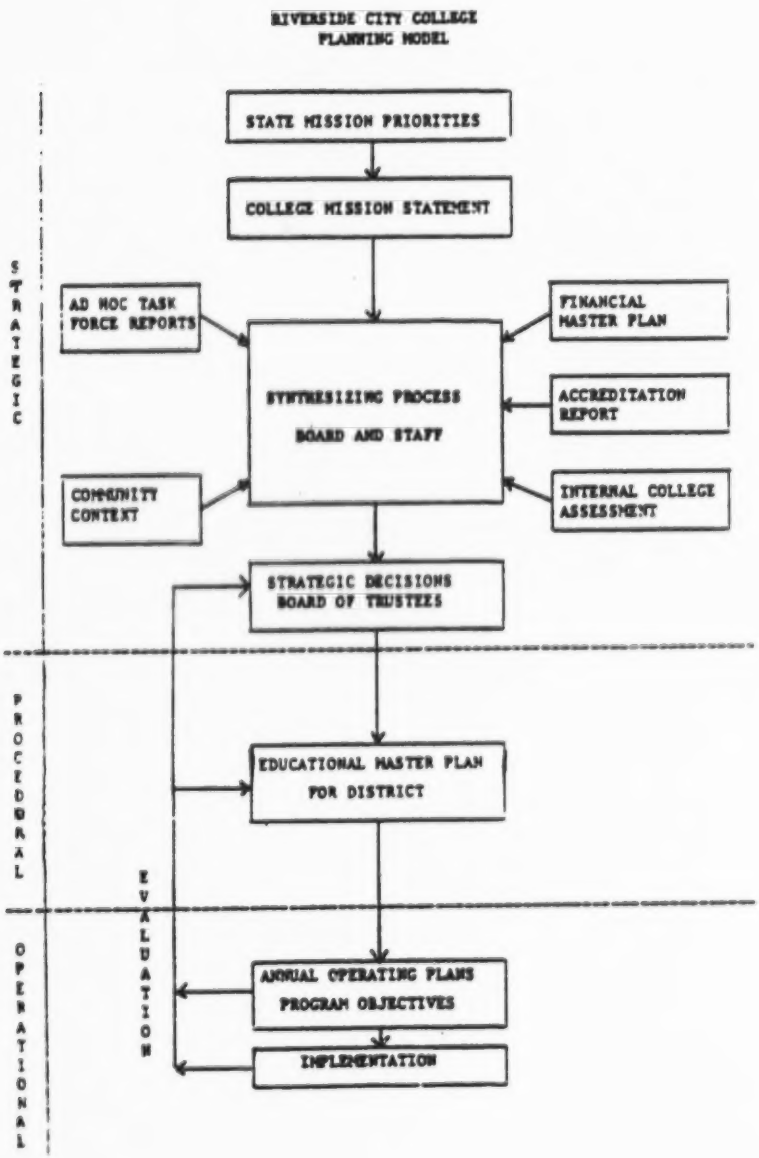

RIVERSIDE CITY COLLEGE
PLANNING MODEL
STRATEGIC
STATE MISSION PRIORITIES
COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT
AD HOC TASK FORCE REPORTS
FINANCIAL MASTER PLAN
SYNTHESIZING PROCESS
BOARD AND STAFF
ACCREDITATION REPORT
COMMUNITY CONTEXT
INTERNAL COLLEGE ASSESSMENT
STRATEGIC DECISIONS
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
PROCEDURAL
EDUCATIONAL MASTER PLAN
FOR DISTRICT
EVALUATION
OPERATIONAL
ANNUAL OPERATING PLANS
PROGRAM OBJECTIVES
IMPLEMENTATION

FIGURE 3.

FLOWCHART OF THE INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING PROCESS

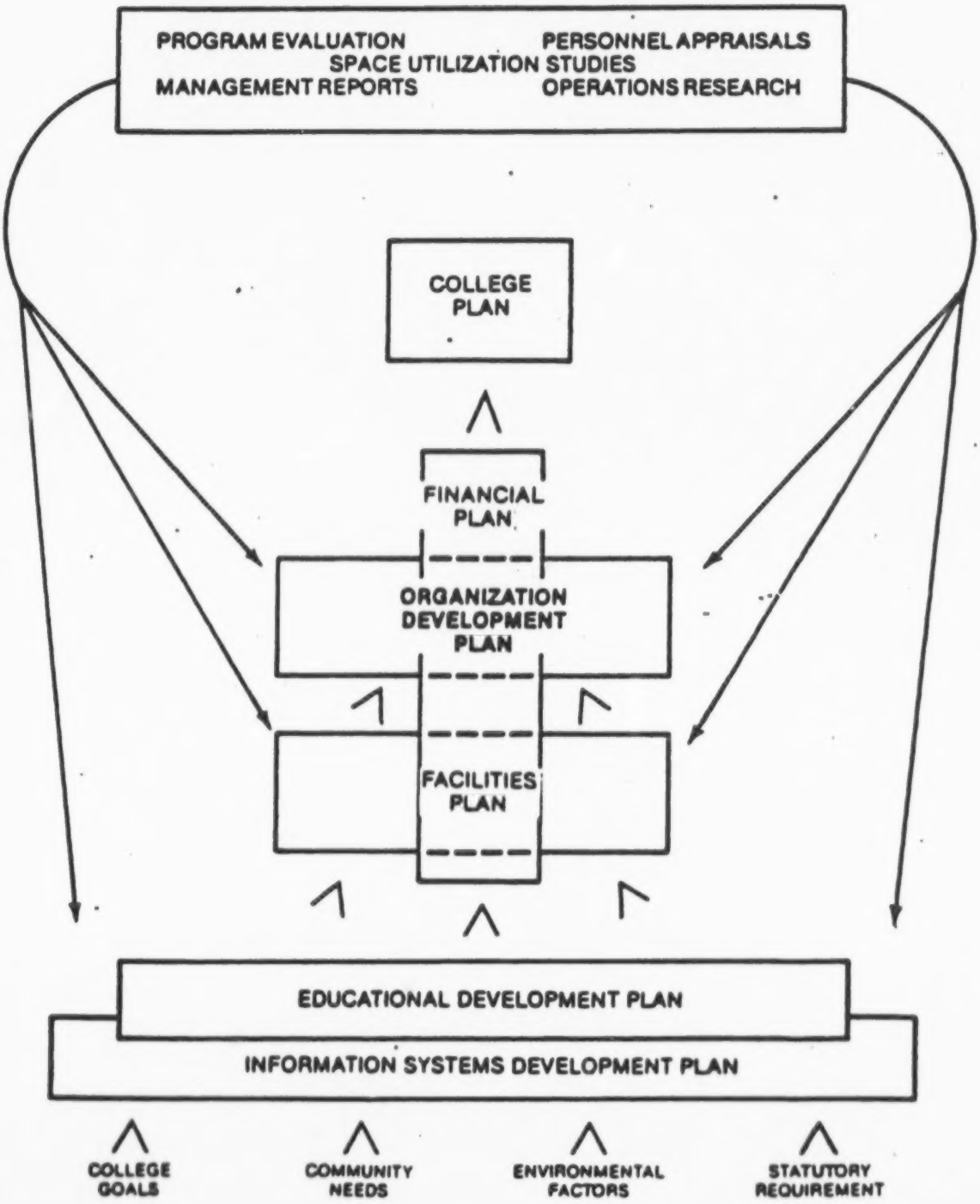


FIGURE 4

CONCEPTUAL MODEL

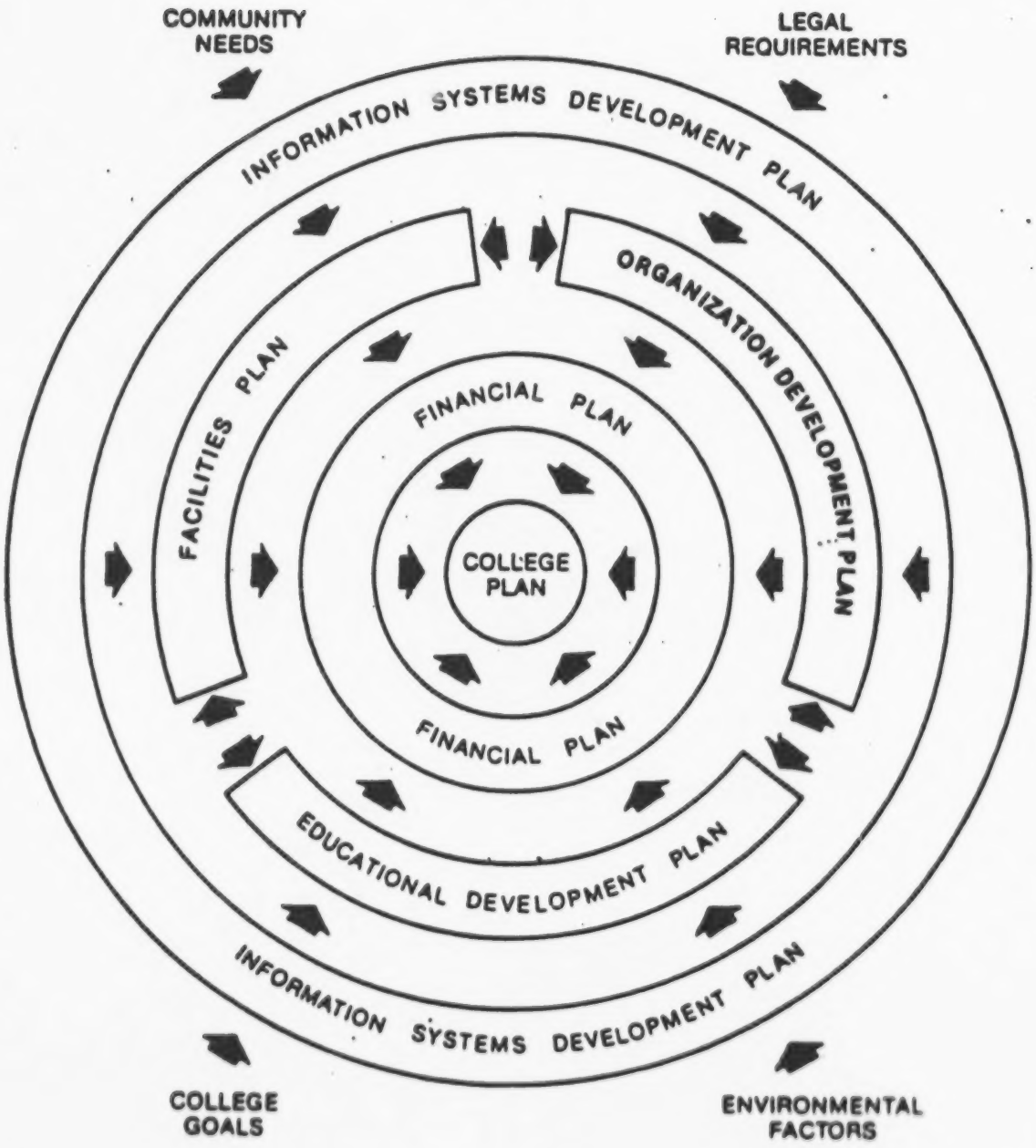
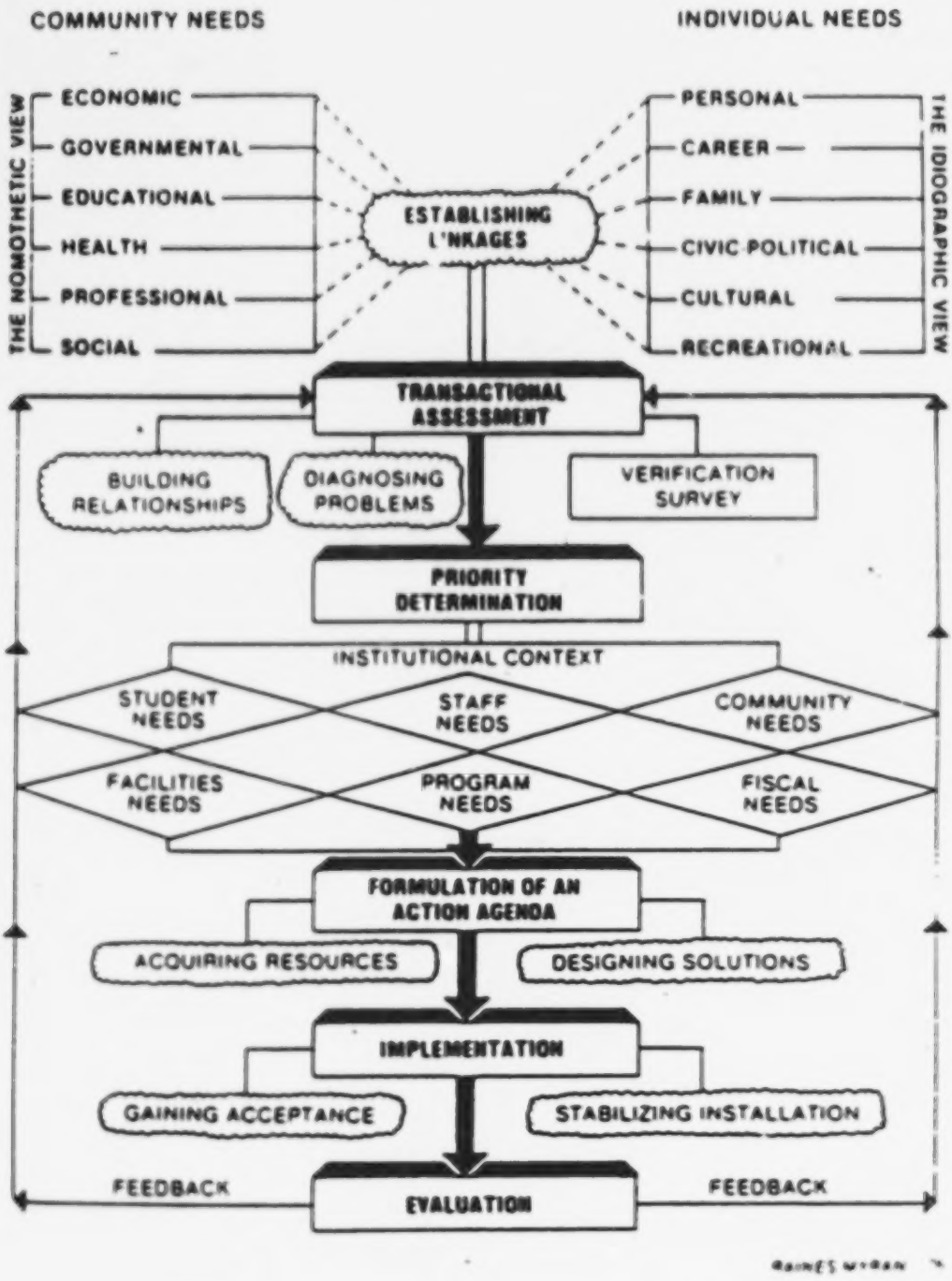


Figure 5.

A Strategic Planning Model



phases can be seen to relate to Bryson's implementation phase with perhaps some of Bryson's step 7 (under strategy formulation) being considered by Riverside as part of its procedural component. Of course differences can also be seen, which makes perusing the figures a potentially enriching experience. Note how more than any of the other designs the Florida conception (Figures 3 and 4) emphasizes the importance of having a well developed information system which can screen and sort data for use in a number of areas such as for a facilities plan, organizational development plan, or educational development plan. Also the Florida Plan makes quite explicit that the process drives the budget. This relationship, however, may be inferred as being implicit in the other models, for instance, Bryson (1988, p. 181) in no uncertain terms cautions planners "to make sure strategic thinking precedes, rather than follows, budgeting. Unfortunately, the only strategic plans most organizations have are their budgets, and those budgets typically have been formulated without benefit of any strategic thought. Attention to mission, mandates, situational assessment, and strategic issues should precede development of budgets." Or as stated in Myran (1982, p. 3): "Planning should be viewed as a prerequisite to the allocation or reallocation of resources (budgeting)."

Conclusion

This paper has sought to reveal a number of relevant facts and findings about strategic planning in higher education today: what it

is, its historical underpinnings, why it is needed, and how it may be conceptualized and applied. Much of the detail which has been omitted--various approaches to strategic issue identification; the benefits from having a clear, succinct, and widely shared vision of success; the development of alternative strategies; guidelines for identification of internal and external threats and opportunities; and other pertinent points of fine-tuning interest--may be found in the references cited.

At a recent strategic planning session at Riverside Community College (May 5, 1989), George Keller spoke in the guest lecturer's role about how America is changing socially, demographically, economically, and technologically more rapidly and dramatically now than he had previously anticipated and with serious implications for higher education. By the year 2035 the ratio of workers to retirees will have been reduced to 3 to 1 from the 5 to 1 value of 1989 (it was 9 to 1 in 1940)--we are becoming an older society, and the elderly typically do not support use of public funds for education. Also, how will the fact that 80% of the people who immigrate to America come from Latin America and Asia play with a curriculum that is historically oriented toward Europe. Furthermore, America, with its bulging national debt and increased reliance on foreign imports, has slipped to seventh in the world in income per capita and has become the leading borrower nation on the world market. Moreover, our middle class is dwindling, sending its more educated and/or those coming from the more stable families to the "upper classes," while dropping its uneducated and those coming from broken homes into the catchments of

the lower classes whose ranks are swelling also because of the increasing number of recruits from minority populations such as the Blacks and Chicanos. And the gap between the extremes is widening. Still America has other problems: on the technological battlefront we must compete with world powers not only in the production of hardware and the like but also in the information delivery business where those "in the know" can beam courses via satellite into the homes of would be learners. Keller's (1989) grave pronouncement--"The gravy days of the sixties and seventies in education are over"--resounded like a threnody in the Riverside auditorium. Nonetheless, an expanding lower class with reading, writing, speaking, and computational skills basically in disarray still espy our colleges and the degrees they offer as a stepping stone out of the ghettos of destitution and out of the shackles of insecurity to a better life.

How to provide access with quality, then, will be tomorrow the same paramount, blistering, Janus-faced conundrum that it is today. Deegan, Tillery, and Associates (1985, p. 287) look somewhat apprehensively to the future, knowing the dual issues of access and achievement will be difficult to realize.

> ...emphasis on achievement rather than course enrollments runs counter to existing funding formulas. But if community colleges do not act to emphasize high quality and student achievement, they will by default be deciding in favor of low quality and limited student achievement. When resources are constrained, some will not be served, community colleges can engage in strategic planning to focus their efforts on target population who receive opportunity with excellence. Alternatively, they can watch dwindling dollars produce diminished quality across the board in their continuing pursuit of the 'all things to all people' philosophy.

A solution Keller seems to be pushing is to develop separate educational structures--virtually colleges within colleges--to deal with the diversity. He suggests "the remedial college," not as some entity enfolded in the main college curriculum but more as an adjunct to or affiliate of the normal college. A similar idea has been proposed by Koltai (1989)--what he calls "the middle college," or college for the underprepared student.

In the end, one could not help coming away from Keller's lecture with the eerie feeling that America's future holds some ponderous, austere, and tremendously challenging problems for educators at all levels. If America's institutions of higher learning try simply to muddle through as most do now, they will in all likelihood become part of the problem rather than arbiters of any solution. In short, the prosaic words of Bryson (1988) are apt: "The most effective public and non-profit planners no doubt are now, and will be increasingly in the future the ones who are best at strategic planning" (p. 43).

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